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THE IMPENDING STRUGGLE  
IN WESTERN ASIA

SAMUEL M. ZWEMER

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MOHAMMED was a true prophet at least once in his life. He taught that among the signs of the coming end of the world and of the fulfillment of Islam's desire would be the rising of the sun in the West. It has risen. From the uttermost Western confines of the Caliphate's temporal empire marched those Albanian troops carrying upon their banners, "Liberty, equality, fraternity, a constitution." This was the first proclamation of the new era, and the dawn of liberty for all Western Asia. Those of us who are reading the papers and praying for the coming of God's Kingdom, and who remember that only three years ago, at the Cairo Conference, a company of veteran missionaries—some of whom had been fighting the battle for fifty years—knelt in prayer before a map of the Moslem world and prayed God to give liberty, are still rubbing our eyes with astonishment at what God has wrought. More surprising and sudden than the transformation of Aladdin's lamp in the "Arabian Nights" have been, not the fictitious, but the real and stupendous changes which God's spirit and God's providence have wrought in Western Asia. Instead of universal espionage, freedom; instead of despotism, constitutions and parliaments; instead of a press that was gagged and throttled, a free press; instead of a grinding system of passports and permits, free emigration and immigration all over

Persia and Arabia and Turkey; instead of banishment, amnesty; and instead of despotism ruling in the capitals against the rights of the people and crushing them down, Abdul Hamid a prisoner at Salonica and parliaments sitting in Teheran and in Constantinople. The great army of spies, numbering forty thousand and said to cost two million pounds a year, has been abolished and the peoples of Turkey and Persia, blindfolded, gagged and manacled for centuries, are almost delirious with new-found liberty. The Damascus railway has reached Medina and electric lights are burning over the prophet's tomb. What hath God wrought in these last three years throughout the vast region of Western Asia!

Turkey, Persia and Arabia, the three great Moslem lands of the nearer East, have experienced greater industrial, intellectual, social and religious changes within the past four years than befell them in the last four centuries. Nevertheless, the most sane statesmen and the most thoughtful missionaries are agreed that nothing has ended in Turkey or in Persia; but something has begun in those lands which every eye is strained to understand.

Western Asia no less than Eastern Asia should rivet our attention because of the impending struggle between the Cross and the Crescent for supremacy, a struggle that is inseparable from the awakening of those great lands. The populations there are smaller, the areas are more limited, the races may not have the same mental and moral calibre—though their inferiority is not proven; but the influence of Western Asia has always been world-wide, and if the Moslem peril in Africa,

of which Bishop Hartzell has spoken, is a real peril and a real menace, the security against that peril and the cure for that menace is found in Western Asia, because Western Asia has always dominated the thought of Africa.

I desire to call your attention to three aspects of the impending struggle throughout the whole of Western Asia. First, to the great battlefield, and to the forces which already are prepared for the work of God. (Call it a battlefield, call it an arena, call it what you please; it is the scene of God's action carried forward according to His own plans.) In the second place, the nature, the origin, the character, the issues of the struggle. And, finally, the certainty of coming victory.

I. What is the battlefield of Western Asia? Its area includes no less than 2,600,000 square miles, ten times the area of all France, or nearly that of all the United States; and in it there is a population of no less than 36,000,000 souls. Leaving out for the instant all that part of Central Asia which by its ideals and ideas, its religion and its language, belongs to Western Asia, the great heart of Asia—Afghanistan, Russian Turkestan, Khiva, Bokhara and Chinese Turkestan—we stand before a population in Persia, Arabia and the Turkish Empire, including Syria and Palestine, of no less than 36,000,000 people. Of these 30,000,000 in round numbers are Mohammedans. I am leaving out of the problem—although, thanks be to God, He has not left out of the solution—the 6,000,000 of those who in spite of fire and sword and dungeon have remained true to the faith of their fathers; I mean the old Oriental churches. But for our present consideration we have

here a massed population of 30,000,000 Mohammedans, which inhabits three countries, bearing a very strategic relation to the whole Mohammedan world. Arabia is the cradle of its creed, Persia of its philosophy, Turkey of its politics.

Persia, in a real sense, has for many centuries been the intellectual and religious fulcrum of all Central Asia. She wields an influence in the Moslem world to-day, and has had an influence for over a thousand years, out of all proportion to the number of her inhabitants or the character of her people. I refer to the influence of Persia as a disintegrating power in the Mohammedan world. Mother of Moslem heresies, this land has been the center and source of authority for all Mohammedans who were not of the orthodox party. The Babiis found their leader and their strength in Persia. Every movement against orthodox Mohammedanism had its rise in that wonderful country of Aryan blood and thought which rebelled against the bald monotheism of the Semites from the deserts of Arabia. Here Aryan thought has largely modified the Semitic creed. From Persia Mohammedan mysticism, poetry and philosophy have gone out on the wings of literature to the ends of the world. And today, not only by the campfires of the Sahara desert or in the mosques of India and Java, but even in Oxford and Berlin you find students of Hafiz and Omar Khayyam and Jelal-ud-din.

The Turks are a ruling race. They have often been greatly abused in the public press, but in family life and as specimens of strong, manly character, they are, as every mis-



sionary to Turkey will testify, high in the scale of the family of nations.

In natural resources Turkey is the fairest and richest portion of the Old World. Under a good government, these undeveloped resources would make her one of the richest countries in Asia. Her population includes a great variety of races and religions, each able to contribute something of real worth to the assets of national greatness. The Albanians, the Armenians, the Greeks and the Kurds have vigor of manhood, pride of race and a splendid history of leadership in the past, while the Ottoman Turks are all of them born rulers and warriors.

Turkey has for four hundred years held the caliphate, the papacy of the Moslem world. In the hands of the Caliph are the old mantle of Mohammed, signifying his prophetic authority, and the sword of Mohammed, signifying his political dominion; and every part of the Moslem world, every Friday at noon prayer, remembers the great political capital and prays Allah to bless the temporal ruler of the Moslem world.

What Jerusalem and Palestine are to Christendom, this and vastly more Mecca and Arabia are to the Mohammedans. They are the center toward which for centuries prayers and pilgrimages have gravitated. How a Student Volunteer Convention shrinks in comparative size when you try to imagine the audience that collects, not in a half circle, but in a perfect circle, around the Kaaba, the Beit Allah—an audience of 70,000 pilgrims, more than fourteen times the capacity of Convention Hall in Rochester! They have been gathering

there yearly for thirteen centuries, without having traveling expenses paid; without attractive music or speakers, crowding from every part of the Moslem world to the heart of Islam for the deepening of their spiritual life. That typifies the strategic importance of Arabia.

Arabia also lies at the cross-roads of the commerce of three continents. It is the causeway into Africa, the bridge between Europe and Asia. And today, there is in North Arabia a struggle to make that great old highway of history, Mesopotamia, the highway of the modern nations. The goal of the game is the commerce of all Asia. The pawns are the Arabs and the Turks; the players, the German Emperor and the King of England; the checker-board, the great Mesopotamian Valley. When the Turkish Sultan gave Germany the concession for the Bagdad railway, he also gave the right to hold Turkish soil no less than twelve miles on each side of that railway for 1,200 miles across the whole of North Arabia. And although Germany was checkmated when Great Britain took Kuwait, she is pushing ahead with her railway. On the other hand, Sir William Willcocks, the wizard of the Nile, has been sent by the Young Turks to open irrigation works and flood three million desert acres with new life and make the desert to blossom like the rose. It is proposed to run a British railway, to be completed in two years, all the way from Bagdad to Damascus and on to Cairo.

According to the *New York Journal of Commerce* and on the authority of Captain Mahan, the future international center of Asiatic politics must be sought in the Persian Gulf.

The present political condition, therefore, of Arabia deeply interests not only Great Britain and Germany, but France and Russia. Turkish rule exists in only three of the seven provinces, and British influence obtains along the entire coast of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. The Persian Gulf has become an English lake and British rule has extended far inland from Aden, while her influence is supreme in the province of Oman. Within the next few years the Tigris-Euphrates basin is destined to be the scene of the greatest contest for commercial supremacy since the partition of Africa.

These three great nations, then, form the arena of the conflict. And what are the populations. The Turkish race, the Persian race, the Arab race, three of the ruling races of the world. The Persians are the Frenchmen of the East; the Turks, in a real sense the Germans of the East, with the same military aspirations, the same military character; and the Arabs, the Anglo-Saxons of the Orient. The Arab philosopher, Ed-Damiri, spoke truth when he said: "Verily, wisdom came down on three from God: on the hand of the Chinese, on the brain of the Frank, and on the tongue of the Arab." Forty-five millions speak the language of Arabia. Two hundred and thirty millions pray five times a day the prayer that Mohammed taught them and in his tongue. Such is the arena, and these are the ruling races—not to speak of other strong peoples, the Albanians, the Armenians, the Kurds, who have all shown magnificent energies in the history of politics and religion.

Asiatic Turkey already has a total of two thousand seven hundred and fifty miles of railway. This, with the splendid

harbors and river navigation, makes the greater part of the Empire accessible. And in that vast area what are the forces? Over six hundred Protestant missionaries are now at work in Persia, Arabia and Turkey, and mission stations are dotted all over these countries: Constantinople, Salonica, Adrianople, Smyrna, Bagdad, Aleppo, Beirut, Brussa, Kaisariyah, Mosul, Mardin, Adana, Jerusalem. Why do I give the names? Every name is eloquent with the sacrifice of life and love and tears, and no less eloquent with potentialities for the coming conflict—Trebizond, Diarbekr, Tabriz, Teheran, Ispahan, Kirman, Yezd, Shiraz, Aden, Muscat, Bahrein and Busrah. There is not in the entire territory a single city of all those given in the "Statesman's Year Book" as having a population exceeding twenty thousand which is not already occupied, save Mecca, Medina, Kerbela, and Meshed, closed by the hand of fanaticism because they are sacred cities. This is the finger of God. If there is to be a struggle in Western Asia—and who will deny that there is—that struggle has been already decided strategically by the pre-occupation of every important center, through the hand of God's providence, by Christian missions. In this mighty conflict, our weapons are not carnal, God forbid. Our weapons are not carnal, and they know it. The only weapon we have is love. The only sword we have is the sword of God's word.

In all five of these Moslem lands, Turkey, Palestine, Syria, Persia, Arabia, our missionaries are engaged in educational, medical and evangelistic work. The Bible has been translated into all the languages of Western Asia, and a large

Christian literature prepared for its polyglot people. At the Beirut Press alone sixty million pages of Christian books were printed in a single year, and in one month orders were on file for a hundred thousand copies of the Arabic scriptures, including eighteen cases of Bibles sent to Shanghai for the Moslems of China! What stronger proof can be given of the strategic importance of Syria in the evangelization of the Moslem world? And who can measure the influence and power of such great educational centers as Robert College, the Syrian Protestant College, and similar institutions at Marsovan, Aintab, Smyrna, Tarsus, Marash and Teheran? Robert College has for the past thirty years educated and trained fifteen nationalities in the principles of justice and self-government and made possible the present new era in Turkey. "It was you Americans," said a Turk to President Tracy of Anatolia College, "who, coming to Turkey, found us in darkness and showed us the way to the light." The American missionaries were the pioneers of modern education in every city of Western Asia. Two score mission hospitals and dispensaries dot the map from Constantinople to Aden, and from Smyrna to Kirman. Medical missionaries have not only disarmed suspicion and prejudice, but have won the lifelong friendship of tens of thousands of the people. One hospital in Arabia had 13,397 out-patients last year!

The march of Western civilization and the work of missions in all these centers, with the stirring of God's spirit in the hearts of the people so long under bondage and oppression, have precipitated a conflict and a struggle which is inevitable and which none can hold back.

II. What is the nature of the conflict? The coming struggle will be not solely religious, but an educational, industrial, social and political upheaval in which religion plays a chief part. The Turks themselves see what is coming. In a leading editorial in one of the most influential Turkish papers, only a few months ago, appeared these words: "The Moslem world is in the throes of a regeneration which will affect its social as well as its political condition, and, indirectly, must concern its ecclesiastical affairs. It will undoubtedly have the same influence that the reformation of Luther"—mark the words—"and the French Revolution had upon society and culture. The dethronement of three absolute monarchs in three independent Mohammedan states is a novel chapter in the history of our religion and calls for grave reflection, fellow Moslems. The social and economical affairs of a nation, as well as its religious affairs, are absolutely allied to its politics, and there cannot be a serious disturbance in the one without having a great influence on the other. It means either a decay or progress, because there is no such thing"—wonderful words from Turkey—"because there is no such thing as rest or stagnation in society." These words, coming from an authoritative source, put before us the real nature of the struggle. It is four-fold: between two political parties, between two civilizations, between two religions, and ultimately between two great leaders.

First of all—there is the struggle between two political parties, the party of progress and the party of conservatism, the party of the constitution and the party of the royalist, the

party of the old Koran and the party of the new regime. By whatever names they are called, it is simply the repetition of history—the liberals, the radicals, over against the conservatives; those who would change the order of society and those who would hold to the ancient order. It is worthy of remark that the revolutionary parties both in Persia and Turkey were not anti-Islamic, nor pan-Islamic; neither professedly religious nor irreligious in character; but were the voice of the people crying for liberty, the expression of general social discontent.

For many years the better class of Persians, Turks and Arabs had freely acknowledged the ignorance, injustice and weakness of the Moslem world and were groping for a remedy. The fuel was ready in the educated class who dared to think; the spark that kindled the flame was the victory of Japan over Russia, which had its influence throughout all Asia and proved that Asiatics can hold their own against Europeans, and that a new nationalism is the only remedy against foreign occupation in lands like Persia and Turkey. But how shall the new nationalism deal with the old religion? Here is the struggle.

The brief history of constitutional government in Persia has already proved the reality of the conflict. The Persian constitution was ready for adoption, when the leaders were compelled to preface the document with an article accepting the authority of the religious law of Islam as final; not only the law of the Koran, but the traditional law of Shiah interpretation. "One might as well bind together the American constitution and the Talmud," says Dr. Shedd, "and make the latter supreme and inviolable." And Lord Cromer in his



“Modern Egypt” states that it has yet to be proved whether Islam can assimilate civilization without succumbing in the process. He adds: “Reformed Islam is Islam no longer.”

The political question today in Persia and in Turkey is whether the old Koran or the new constitution shall have the right of way. Although the Sheikh-el-Islam has publicly declared that “The Turkish parliament is the most exact application of the Koranic law and constitutional government is the highest possible illustration of the caliphate,” we have a right to doubt his assertion—remembering the thirteen centuries of Moslem intolerance and despotism. Those who read the Koran in Morocco, Eastern Turkey and Arabia have not yet discovered its constitutional principles, and the reaction against the new Sultan and the new parliament is already deep and widespread. One of the most prominent dailies in Cairo is advocating the restoration of Abdul Hamid, while in Yemen a new Mahdi has appeared, whose followers number twenty-five thousand. He preaches the old religion, and by his authority liars are punished by the pulling out of the tongue and thieves by the amputation of the hand.

The conflict between the old and the Young Turkish party is not only inevitable, but is irreconcilable. Both parties are animated by the same patriotism, but their ideals are wholly different and contradictory. For the Old Turks Islam is an end; for the New Turks it is not an end, but only a means. The New Turks are hoping to put the new wine into the old bottles by carefully diluting it, while the Old Turks have no use for the new wine at all. In the present Turkish Parlia-



ment, out of two hundred and fifty-six members, two hundred and thirteen are Moslems, and it would be safe to say that the vast majority are at heart opposed to any change in the real character of Islam and will fight to the end to make it the only religion of the state.

Islam does not believe in a state church, as Lord Curzon has pointed out, but in a church state, and Lord Cromer has shown in his "Modern Egypt" that the three great defects of Islam—the position of womanhood, its unchanging civil law, and its intolerant spirit—are forever incompatible with real progress. When a man so well informed as Lord Cromer says it is impossible we must not be too ready to believe that the promulgation of a paper constitution is enough to insure Western Asia at once the rights we have purchased for ourselves in the course of centuries at a great price. The conflict is not merely political, but industrial and social. It is a struggle between two civilizations; between the ideals of the Moslem world and those of Christendom. Islam has run its roots deep for thirteen centuries into all the ideals of the East. Architecture, art, music, social life, language, literature—all these by their presence or by their absence proclaim the power of Mohammed and his faith. You might as well try to pick out the fossils from a limestone rock with your finger nail as to remove from Arabic literature the traces of Mohammedanism.

The clash of modern civilization against the teachings of Islam is evident on every hand. When it was proposed to adopt European time for Turkey the clerical party made such an uproar that the President of the Chamber was compelled to leave

the House and the motion was withdrawn. So the days continue to begin at sunset and watches must be reset every day because of the Koran. The new railway to Mecca is fitted up with a chapel car in the shape of a mosque. This car allows pilgrims to perform their devotions during the journey and has a minaret six feet high. Around the sides are verses from the Koran; a chart at one end indicates the direction of prayer, and at the other end are vessels for the ritual ablutions. Will the orthodox Arabs consider such *prayer de-luxe* in accord with Mohammed's teachings? As long as Mohammed and his teaching are the ideals of conduct and the standard of character there must be this clash between modern civilization and the unchangeable standards of Arabian medievalism. If it is impossible to change the curriculum of El Azhar University in Cairo, will that institution or Robert College control the thought of Western Asia?

When freedom was proclaimed in Persia and Turkey, newspapers sprang up like mushrooms, and nearly all of them were advocates of liberty, equality and freedom. In Teheran the names of the journals themselves were indicative of progress. The newsboys cried out their wares and sold copies of "The Assembly," "Civilization," "The Cry of the Country," "The True Dawn," "Progress," and "Knowledge," The French *Revue du Monde Musulman* published a list of no less than seven hundred and forty-seven newspapers and magazines which had been issued in Turkey since July 24, 1908, the birthday of liberty. The old order of the press has gone. Censorship has ceased, but whither is the new journal-

ism drifting? It is very significant that some of the leading papers are already the mouthpieces of intolerance and show a sullen attitude toward Christianity and reform, stating that the constitution is destructive of the sacred law of Mohammed.

The position of womanhood will also be determined in the coming struggle. Some of the women themselves are asserting their rights, abolishing the use of the veil and claiming the privileges and honor of womanhood. There is loud demand for female education. Judge Kasim Ameen, a leading Moslem in Cairo, published two books on "The Emancipation of Womanhood," which have had a wide circulation in Western Asia. He exposes the evils of polygamy and urges that it be prohibited by law. "Polygamy," says he, "produces jealousies, hatred, intrigues and crimes innumerable. Many critics claim that women in the harems are happy. How do they know? Have they any knowledge of harem life?" No wonder these books aroused a storm of opposition and bitter reply. To prohibit polygamy by law would be to abrogate the Koran and to stigmatize the prophet. Civilization alone will not end the horrors of Islam behind the veil in Persia and Arabia. Pierre Loti's "Disenchanted" shows that the civilization of the harem without emancipation means moral suicide! Only Christ can emancipate Moslem womanhood, and three-fourths of all the women in Western Asia are still under the yoke of this awful creed, suffering the burden of tyranny and oppression.

There can be no real liberty in any department of life, under Moslem rule. Fifty years ago the Sultan said in his great edict of emancipation: "All forms of religion shall be

allowed to exist in my realm without let or hindrance, and no subject shall be molested in the exercise of his faith. None shall be forced to renounce his religion." Fifty years ago this constitution declared that no one in the bounds of the Turkish Empire should be persecuted for his religion. Fifty years ago there was religious liberty on paper. Three years ago there was religious liberty on the streets. Moslem and Armenian embraced each other. In great capitals over arches of triumph you could read, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." People were frantic with joy. They held memorial services over the Armenians killed in the massacres years ago and over the Turks who had died in the revolution. It seemed the dawn of a new era.

And then came Adana. Yes, *Adana*. If there is a single word that would stir the passion in the blood of age and make an infant's sinews strong as steel it is that single word Adana. We could not have said it at Nashville; we could not have said it two years ago; but now we must say "Adana!" And if Jesus Christ's love is to be our example, then after we say "Adana," and after we read "Adana," you and I must say, as He said: "Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for those that despitefully use you and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven." And here is the record, not the sensational reports of the press, not the letters of missionaries written in the terror of their suffering and sorrow and despair, but the cold-blood summing up in Boston, in the office of the American Board's Monthly after the storm was over. "The atrocity

with which these Moslems devised tortures and insults to increase the agony of those they killed was truly fiendish, almost unbelievable and far too horrible to relate in detail. Solemn promises were violated and whole villages were tricked into giving up their arms that they might be slaughtered without means of defense, like rats in a hole. Women were compelled to watch while their husbands and children were killed before their eyes; groups were tolled off and marched to some convenient place, where, instead of being shot as they entreated and begged, they were mercilessly hacked to pieces, men and women and little children, as it was said, 'Not to waste powder and bullets on such swine.' Dead and wounded were then piled together and fires built to consume them. Mothers with newborn babies were dragged from their hiding places and life beaten out of them. Women and girls were reserved for a worse fate. Everywhere there was an orgy of hate and lust, with hardly a hand lifted to end the struggle."—The fury of that mob has ceased, but the character of Islam has not changed. It was not a merry Christmas in Celicia, with twenty thousand orphans uncared for and widows crying to God for the avenging of their slain. And there has been no vengeance nor a just meting out of adequate punishment.

What does it mean? It means the life and death struggle of men who believe their religion, who persecute for their religion. It means also that back of Adana (God grant it) there may have been Sauls of Tarsus by the score, who breathed threatening and slaughter against the Church of God because already the arrow of conviction was in their souls, and

they were kicking against the goads of the Christ. Not in vain for fifty years have the American missionaries in Turkey, like Miner Rogers and Henry Maurer, poured out their life and their love and scattered the Word of God by tens of thousands of copies. "Whatsoever a man soweth," God saith, "that shall he also reap," and as sure as God's law, we may look upon Turkey as the coming nation of the future, in Western Asia. For if anything is true, it is this, that Western Asia is through and through religious. In Arabia, when they quarrel, they begin by calling their enemy a swine; they go farther when they call him a Jew; then they say he is a Christian; and if they want to rise to the very height of all vituperative, they say, "That man is a *Kaffir*, he is a man without faith." In Turkey you cannot insult a man with a more damning insult than to say of him that he is "*dinsiz*," a man without religion. What a wonderful part of the world, where the fact of not having a faith in the supernatural brands a man as belonging to the very lowest caste of society.

There is not the least doubt that tens of thousands of Moslems in Turkey and Persia, and even in Arabia, are intellectually convinced of the truth of Christianity over against Islam. The philosophical disintegration of Islam, which began in Persia by the rise of Moslem sects, is now being hastened through newspaper discussions. There is a general unrest. There are frantic attempts to save the ship by throwing overboard much of the old cargo. The attack on orthodox Mohammedanism was never so keen or strong on the part of any missionary as has been the attack from those inside Islam. If

you will read the report of the Mecca Conference, when forty Moslems met together in secret conclave to point out the causes of decay in their religion and listed them—fifty and more defects in this religion of their prophet—and published the list as a document to scatter over the Moslem world, you will no longer accuse any missionary of dealing harshly with this tissue of falsehoods buttressed by some great truths which we call Islam. If Islam reformed is Islam no longer, then what will take the place of the old traditions? When the shriek of the locomotive is heard at Mecca, will Arabia sleep on in its patriarchal sleep? Will the Nomads beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks, when modern irrigation transforms the desert into a garden? Will Mohammedanism with its ideals prevail, or Christianity? Will polygamy or monogamy? Will a free press or a press that is throttled? Will the constitution or the Koran be the law of Western Asia? Will there be more Adanas or will there be more proclamations of liberty, equality, fraternity? Will the ideal of character be Mohammed or Christ? For, believe me, in the final issue, in the last analysis, the struggle now going on in Western Asia in hearts, in homes, in parliaments, in the press, is the struggle between two great personalities.

I wish I might call upon any Moslem mullah to whom I could speak the Arabic tongue and ask him one question and let his answers convince you. I will ask the question and any missionary will tell you that this Moslem mullah would answer "Yes." I will ask my Moslem friend whether the words that I now quote are not every one of them true as regards the



prophet Mohammed, according to Moslem teaching: "Who is the first born of all creation. For in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things have been created through him and unto him, and in him all things consist, and he is the head of the body of the church of Islam, who is the beginning, the first born; that in all things Mohammed might have the pre-eminence." That is good orthodox Mohammedanism. I can match every statement taken from the Apostle Paul in Mohammedan tradition; I can match every statement in a single Mohammedan hymn called "The Poem of the Mantle," in which they say, "All glory and praise be to Mohammed, the glory of history, the first born of all creatures." But *you* do not believe that. Hear the words of Isaiah: "Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images." That is the issue in Western Asia. And if that issue means a struggle, and a struggle to the end then you and I must accept that issue or prove disloyal to Him whom we call our King, "in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily"—not in Mohammed. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He is the ideal of character, not Mohammed. "Thou, O Christ, art all they want." Do you believe it? Will you give Christ to them? That is the issue of the conflict.

III. And what is the hope of victory? The victory is not hanging in the balance. It is no question of a final issue. It is merely a question whether it shall be now or shall be long



deferred. God has thrown open wide the doors, and shown us men inside the camp who are prepared to surrender the keys of the whole situation. He has unmuzzled the press, and given us, not as a promise or a prophecy, but as newspaper history—"Be of good cheer, I have overcome Persia, I have overcome Turkey, I have overcome Arabia." Where is our courage, that we hang back? Fear sees giants, but faith sees only God. I never deny the struggle, but gain faith from that wonderful parable of Jesus Christ when I think of the Moslem world and of Arabia: "When a strong man, fully armed, guardeth his palace, his goods are at peace; but when a stronger than he shall come, he taketh from him all the armor in which he trusted and divideth his spoil." To-day has this Scripture been fulfilled before our very eyes. This day there are glorious opportunities for every man and woman who volunteers for Western Asia. Every one of the mission stations is fearfully undermanned, and calls loudly for reinforcements. Educational, industrial, medical opportunities abound everywhere throughout Western Asia. Doors of opportunity are open in every one of the great cities to prepare not only the teachers of to-morrow, but the statesmen to guide the ship of state over the stormy seas of social and religious unrest.

And look beyond. In every unoccupied part of the vast field there is such unique opportunity as never has been since the days of the apostles; and there are glorious impossibilities in these unoccupied fields. There is the greater part of Russian Asia, there are four provinces in Arabia, there is one prov-

ince in Persia without a single missionary. It is easy for us to sing as soldiers of the Cross, "Like a mighty army moves the Church of God." It does not move. It hugs the trenches, and out there you are leaving single workers to die alone. Hear their cry. Hear their prayer:

"More than half beaten, but fearless,  
Facing the storm and the night;  
Breathless and reeling, but tearless,  
Here in the lull of the fight,  
I who bow not but before Thee,  
God of the fighting Clan,  
Lifting my fists I implore Thee,  
Give me the heart of a man!

What though I live with the winners,  
Or perish with those who fall;  
Only the cowards are sinners,  
Fighting the fight is all,  
Strong is my foe—he advances!  
Snapt is my blade, O Lord!  
See the proud banners and lances!  
Oh spare me this stub of a sword!"

That is the cry that goes up from your missionaries, lonely soldiers who have waited long for reinforcements with hope deferred, but with hearts on fire.

Thank God also for the inspiration of the pioneers who

died not having received the promise. No part of the world has a richer heritage of predecessors. Upon whom has their mantle fallen? Who will smite the Jordan and see it part asunder? Where is the Lord God of Henry Martyn and Keith Falconer; the God of Parsons and Fiske, of Goodell and Dwight, of Hamlin, Van Dyck and Bishop French? He can do it if He will.

In the impending struggle throughout all Western Asia, the clash of mediæval with modern thought, of barbarism against civilization, of the Koran against the Bible, of Christ against Mohammed, what part shall the students of America play? No field in the world calls for a more dauntless faith and more fearless manhood than these lands of Western Asia. But love is strong as death; love laughs at locksmiths, and there are no closed doors for the Gospel of the living Christ. It is now or never for self-sacrificing obedience.

Far above the fight is our Captain and every missionary to the Moslem world turns to that nineteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation. I believe God gave it to us for this struggle in Western Asia—the last portrait of our Saviour Jesus Christ. “I saw heaven opened, and I saw a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.” And the armies of Heaven followed him, until the end of the struggle is complete and final victory for the Son of God.

Twenty years ago, I stood on Arabian soil for the first time, and walked beyond the wall of Jiddah to the great gate that leads out to Mecca. I did not know much Arabic, but

I could spell out the words over the gate, and they were these: "Ya Fattah," (O thou who openest). Is not that gate a symbol, not only of Mecca with its closed doors, but of every difficulty, of every glorious impossibility? I thought then and I think now of our Saviour Jesus Christ, "On whose shoulders are the keys of the house of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, who shutteth and no man openeth." To His Kingdom there are no frontiers; in His Kingdom there are no passports; in His Kingdom there is absolute liberty. He is Lord of all. Will you accept His challenge and go?

Above all, think of the inspiration of His life in Western Asia. If God so loved the world, He loved it as a unit; but if Jesus Christ is the Son of Man, He loves Western Asia. His manger and His Cross stood there. In Western Asia His blood was spilled. In Western Asia He walked the hills. There His tears fell for Jerusalem. There His eye still rests. Thither He will come again. It was in Western Asia that He said, "All authority is given unto Me;" and although for thirteen centuries His royal rights have been disputed by a usurper, they have never been abrogated. Shall we give Western Asia to Him, or shall Western Asia remain the Empire of Mohammed? Shall Bethlehem hear five times a day "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is God's apostle," and shall not a single one of us dare go if God will to Mecca itself, the very stronghold of Islam, and preach the Gospel of the great King?

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Copies of this pamphlet may be ordered from the Student Volunteer Movement, 125 East 27th Street, New York City, at 5c. each, 40c. per dozen, \$2.50 per hundred, express charges prepaid.

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